

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 SSM-05 ISO-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
ACDA-12 MCE-00 OMB-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 /105 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----030575 060007Z /73

O 052255Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
JCS WASHDC 0000
SECDEF WASHDC 0000
NSC WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
USCINCEUR
USICA WASHDC

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MAY 5

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MAY 5, 1978.
FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS KEN BROWN.

MR. BROWN: I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN WITH A BRIEF NOTE OF
WELCOME FOR FORMER PRESIDENT FORD'S EXPRESSED SUPPORT
YESTERDAY FOR THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSALS FOR AIRCRAFT SALES
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TO ISRAEL, EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA. MR. FORD'S SUPPORT IS
IN THE BEST TRADITION OF BIPARTISANSHIP IN KEY FOREIGN
POLICY DECISIONS. PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE SECRETARY HAVE
OFTEN NOTED THAT IN PROPOSING THE SALES TO ISRAEL AND
SAUDI ARABIA THEY ARE FOLLOWING THROUGH ON COMMITMENTS
MADE BY THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION. THE SUPPORT FOR THE
LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS OF EGYPT, THE KEY MODERATE ARAB
GOVERNMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST PROCESS, IS ALSO A CONTINUA-
TION OF SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION.
LIKE OUR PREDECESSORS, THIS ADMINISTRATION BELIEVES THAT
THE UNITED STATES' ROLE IN THAT PEACE MAKING PROCESS
DICTATES STRONG SUPPORT BOTH FOR THE SECURITY NEEDS OF
ISRAEL AND FOR MODERATE ARAB GOVERNMENTS.

Q. MR. CHRISTOPHER HAD A MEETING WITH THE HOUSE COMMITTEE

AND HE PROMISED TO MEET THEM AGAIN ON MONDAY. AND THERE
WERE REPORTS THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE WANTED TO
INCREASE THE PLANES TO ISRAEL. AND THEN HE PROMISED TO
LOOK INTO IT. HAS THE ADMINISTRATION ANY INTENTION OF

INCREASING THE PACKAGE, THE PLANES THAT WERE SUBMITTED TO THE CONGRESS?

A. I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANYTHING FURTHER THAN WHAT WE HAVE SAID. I ADDRESSED THIS QUESTION YESTERDAY AND OF COURSE THE PRESIDENT ADDRESSED IT IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE.

YESTERDAY I REITERATED WHAT THE ACTING SECRETARY HAD SAID IN THE MEETINGS WITH CONGRESS, AND WE HAVE, AND STILL ARE, EXPLAINING OUR STRONG BELIEF IN THE PROPOSALS AS THEY STAND, AND WE ARE IN THE PROCESS LISTENING TO LEGITIMATE CONCERNS AS EXPRESSED BY CONGRESS.

WE ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER THESE GENUINE CONCERNS, BUT UNCLASSIFIED

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BEYOND THAT WE HAVE SAID NOTHING TO SUGGEST THAT WE WOULD ACCEPT SPECIFIC CHANGES IN THE PROPOSALS.

Q. HAS THE STATE DEPARTMENT YET DISCOVERED THE DOCUMENT OR THE EVENTS THAT FORMS THE BASIS FOR YOUR CLAIM THAT THE SAUDI DEAL WAS PROMISED BY THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION? I HAVEN'T YET SEEN THIS IN PRINT, AND I KNOW A NUMBER OF CONGRESSMEN ASKED ABOUT THIS THE OTHER DAY.

A. I DONT HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT.

Q. COULD I ASK YOU TO TAKE THAT QUESTION?

A. YES.

Q. IN RELATION TO YOUR STATEMENT ABOUT PRESIDENT FORD'S COMMENTS OF YESTERDAY, WERE YOU IN TOUCH WITH MR. FORD BEFORE YOU MADE THIS STATEMENT?

A. I DONT KNOW IF ANYONE WAS IN TOUCH WITH PRESIDENT FORD, BUT I BELIEVE THAT WOULD BE SOMETHING YOU COULD ADDRESS TO THE WHITE HOUSE, AND THEY COULD HAVE AN ANSWER FOR YOU. I DONT KNOW.

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Q. YESTERDAY YOU LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT THE ADMINISTRATION MIGHT BE OPEN TO CHANGING ITS PROPOSAL IF IT MET SOME OF THESE LEGITIAMTE CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY CONGRESS. THE PRESIDENT SAID YESTERDAY HE SEES NO NEED TO CHANGE THE PROPOSAL AT ALL. SO WHAT IN FACT IS THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE? IF THE ADMINISTRATION, AS THE PRESIDENT SAID, HAS NO INTENTION OF CHANGING ITS PACKAGE, THEN WHAT YOU SAID YESTERDAY WAS MISLEADING.
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IF WHAT YOU SAID IS THE GOVERNING PHILOSOPHY OF THE ADMINISTRATION, AND WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID WAS MISLEADING, AND WHAT I AM ASKING IS WHAT IS IN FACT THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE ADMINISTRATION? ARE YOU ENTERTAINING THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE IF YOU BELIEVE THAT WHAT THE CONGRESS IS RAISING IS LEGITIMATE?

A. I BELIEVE WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID WAS THAT HE EXPRESSED HIS CONFIDENCE IN THE PROPOSALS AS THEY STAND AND DID NOT THINK THAT THEY NEEDED TO BE CHANGED. AND THIS IS SOMETHING THAT I CAN REITERATE TODAY.

I OBVIOUSLY CAN REFER BACK TO WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID YESTERDAY, AND, AT THE SAME TIME, I CAN REFER BACK TO WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY, WHICH WAS THAT WE HAVE A STRONG BELIEF IN THE PROPOSALS AS THEY STAND. AT THE SAME TIME, CONGRESS HAS EXPRESSED SOME CONCERNS, AND WE HAVE SAID THAT WE ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER THOSE CONCERNS.

I WOULD REITERATE ALSO THAT WE HAVE SAID NOTHING TO SUGGEST THAT WE WOULD ACCEPT SPECIFIC CHANGES IN THE PROPOSALS.

Q. IS IT NOT POSSIBLE THAT YOU CAN MEET SOME OF THE CONCERNS WITHOUT CHANGING THE NON-PACKAGE, AS FOR INSTANCE PUTTING IN A SUPPLEMENTARY FOR ISRAELI PLANES OR A COMMITMENT FOR ISRAELI PLANES IN THE FUTURE, WHICH WOULDN'T CHANGE THE NON-PACKAGE AS IT STANDS? ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT?

2. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN AT THE PRESS BRIEFING MAY 4, THE FOLLOWING ANSWER WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE.

Q. HAVE ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH
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BEGIN SINCE HE LEFT WASHINGTON AND URGED HIM TO CHANGE SOME OF HIS COMMENTS?

A. NO. CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2773714
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MAY 5
TAGS: SOPN, JO
To: AMMAN BEIRUT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
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